[5th February 1924

Railways.

Railway from Arantangi to Karaikudi.

112 Q.—Rao Bahadur A. M. MURUGAPPA CHETTIYAR: Will the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state whether there is any scheme under the consideration of the Government for the construction of a railway from Arantangi to Karaikudi, and if so, whether the scheme is likely to be taken up in the immediate future?

A.—Yes. The question is under the consideration of the Railway Board.

Aid to local bodies for railway construction.

113 Q.—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government and the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state whether it is the intention of the Government to aid local bodies by means of loans or otherwise in the work of railway construction?

A.—The Government have not yet come to any decision. They are awaiting a reply from the Government of India to a reference made to them on the subject.

Financial aid to district boards for expenditure on Railways.

114 Q.—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government and the hon. the Member for Finance be pleased to state whether the Government have addressed the Government of India to set apart a portion of the loan funds, or of the 150 crores set apart for Railways, to assist such district boards as have a substantial sum at their disposal for expenditure on Railways?

A.—The answer is in the negative.

The Tanjore district board railway.

115 Q.—Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government and the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state the percentage borne by working expenses to gross earnings on the several district board railway lines, and, if the percentage is high in the case of the Tanjore district board railway, the reasons for the marked increase?

A.—The information is not available.

Mr. A. RANGANATHA MUDALIYAR:—"I think it is a matter of some importance if the working expenses bear a high percentage to the gross earnings. Therefore, will the Government be pleased to call for the information?"

The hon. the RAJA OF PANAGAL:—"I have no objection to call for the information."

The Tanjore district board railway.

116 Q.—Mr. S. SATYAMURTI: Will the hon. the Minister for Local Self-Government and the hon. the Home Member be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that the Tanjore district board has been asked by the Government of Madras to consider a proposal to sell its railway to the South Indian Railway Company; and